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NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



June 2015

Southeast Corridor Meeting held in Raleigh on May 6



USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx addresses meeting attendees.

On May 6th, USDOT Secretary Anthony Foxx convened a meeting of transportation officials and representatives from states across the southeast in Raleigh to discuss the Southeast Corridor. Secretary Tony Tata and NCDOT hosted the meeting in Raleigh. Each state gave a brief summary of the current status of developing improved passenger rail in their state. The summaries detailed improvements that had been completed, joint activities between units of governments and states, along with various essential studies that are being pursued to bring higher performing and higher speed rail to the Southeast Corridor.

Acting FRA Administrator Sarah Feinberg spoke about the importance of cooperation and collaboration between the states in order to make progress across state lines. USDOT Secretary Foxx expressed his interest in expanding high speed rail throughout the Southeast Corridor. Secretary Foxx made clear throughout the meeting that he was willing to assist states to ensure that continued progress is being made in the corridor.

North Carolina and Virginia were deemed example states because of the Virginia-North Carolina High Speed Rail Compact, which has allowed for joint collaboration between the states in planning for near and long term passenger service improvements through Virginia and North Carolina. Secretary Tata explained that North Carolina recognizes the significance of the Southeast Corridor in

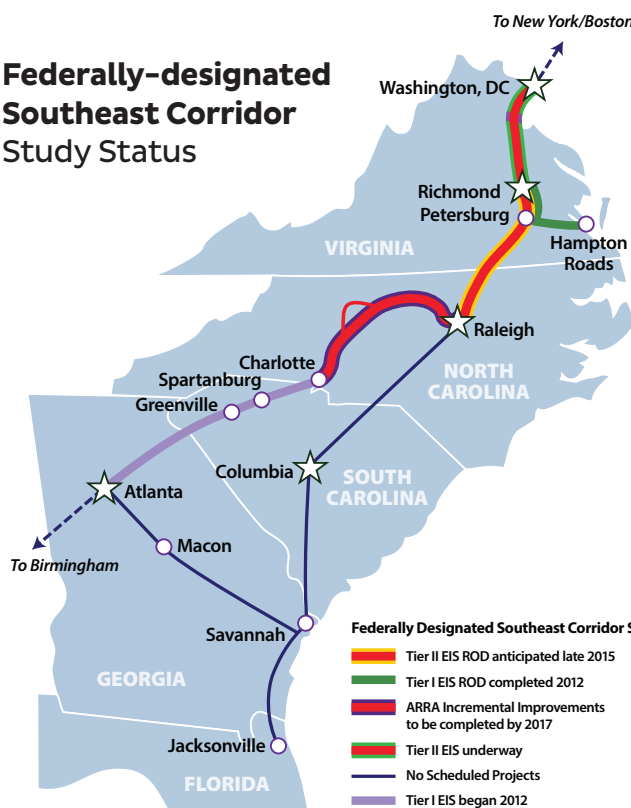
regional and national mobility and economic vitality and remains committed to moving these efforts forward.

The group heard an overview on the activity of the Southeast Corridor Coalition, consisting of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Rail Director Paul Worley noted that efforts of the states go back to 1992 when the Southeast Corridor was designated and remain consistent and current in communication and collaboration. In addition numerous state and local government officials, including Congressman David Price and Virginia Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne, made presentations about state initiatives and how passenger service and improvements must be considered in a system that also needs to consider freight capacity and fluidity as a modal priority as well.

"Commercial feasibility of a regional corridor will also require a partnership with a freight railroad to maximize return on capital and maintenance investments," said Worley.

This meeting was the first of several future meetings that will include states from the Southeast Corridor to discuss the continued progress and strides being made to bring high speed rail to the Southeast US.

Federally-designated Southeast Corridor Study Status



Learn more about studies underway on the Southeast Corridor:

Raleigh to Richmond Tier II Study:

<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/sehsr/default.html>

On this page are links to other SEC corridor studies – Washington, DC to Richmond, VA, Richmond to Hampton Roads and Atlanta to Charlotte.

NCDOT helps break ground on Raleigh Union Station



Federal, state and local dignitaries breaking ground for Raleigh Union Station. R to L: NCDOT Transportation Secretary Tony Tata, Congressman David Price, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory, Raleigh Mayor Nancy McFarlane, U.S. Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy Carlos Menendez and Amtrak Senior Manager of State Corridors Jay McArthur

Governor Pat McCrory, N.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Tony Tata and Raleigh Mayor Nancy McFarlane led a contingent of officials at a groundbreaking ceremony on May 8 for Raleigh Union Station, the new passenger rail station in downtown Raleigh. The ceremony was held at the former Dillon Supply Company Warehouse at 510 W. Martin Street.

"Raleigh Union Station will allow us to better meet current and future rail needs and provide multimodal connectivity that is critical to the mobility and vitality of this region," Secretary Tata said. "Investing in rail improvements like this plays an important role in attracting new opportunities for our communities and ensuring our state's long-term success, and NCDOT remains committed to working with our partners to make this project a reality."

"Our administration is committed to investing in infrastructure and transportation to help connect all regions of North Carolina with jobs and opportunity," said Governor McCrory. "Breaking ground on Raleigh's Union Station is one more example of how the state is working with cities and local communities to achieve this goal. This multi-modal transit station will create jobs and connect people throughout our state for generations to come."

Raleigh Union Station is a joint initiative of NCDOT's Rail Division and the City of Raleigh, with assistance from Go Triangle and USDOT, FRA. Scheduled to open in 2017, the station will replace the existing Amtrak Station on Cabarrus Street, which routinely experiences overcrowding and lacks the adequate platform size to serve longer trains. It has been contemplated in planning documents since the 1990s and is a significant component in the city's draft Downtown Master Plan.

The total budget for the Raleigh Union Station project is \$79.8 million. NCDOT has contributed \$9 million in state matching funds, and facilitated the redirection of \$15 million dollars in Federal American Reinvestment and Recovery Act funds. The City of Raleigh is the recipient of two grants from the USDOT TIGER program (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) totaling \$38 million.



NCDOT Board approves Operating Agreement for Piedmont and Northern Railway Line in Gaston County

The N.C. Board of Transportation has formally approved the lease agreement between NCDOT and Iowa Pacific Holdings/Piedmont Railway for rail service on NCDOT's Piedmont & Northern (P&N) rail corridor in Gaston County.

Under the terms of the agreement, Iowa Pacific's Piedmont Railway subsidiary will operate, maintain and market freight service on the 13-mile rail line that serves the communities of Mount Holly, Belmont, Ranlo, Lowell and Gastonia in Gaston County. Also, the railroad may have the opportunity to provide passenger rail services including excursion, tourist, dinner and holiday season trains.

Blue Ridge Southern, North Carolina's newest short line, receives FRRCSI Funding

The Blue Ridge Southern (BLU) is the state's newest short line railroad. This 92-mile railroad, previously owned by Norfolk Southern, was purchased by Watco Companies in 2014. It serves Asheville, Canton, Waynesville, Sylva, Fletcher and Hendersonville and connects with Norfolk Southern's terminal in Asheville. It serves Evergreen Packaging, Duke Energy, Kimberly-Clark, Wilsonart and other customers. FRRCSI is providing a short line assistance grant to upgrade the railroad's infrastructure. Work will be ongoing over the next several months.



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*Up to 2 kids (age 2-12) ride for \$5 with a regular full fare adult on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays within North Carolina. Valid for travel now – August 27. Use fare code V615 when buying your ticket. Not valid with other offers. Other restrictions may apply.

2

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Get 10% off the price of your ticket automatically if you travel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Tickets must be reserved three days in advance to get the discount. No promo code is required. Purchase tickets at ncbytrain.org.

Andy Fletcher, Rail Enthusiast and Advocate, visits Raleigh Amtrak Station for 25th Anniversary of Carolinian

People often ask, "Why trains?" and the answer is he just loves them. Andy Fletcher has long been a rail enthusiast and advocate and since childhood has had an appreciation for the beauty of trains. He began drawing trains—one of his first loves—from his own photos when he was a child. All of his drawings are done by hand with a pencil and watercolor pens. He has drawn over 2,500 trains, from steam to modern diesel and cars, cabooses and other equipment. Andy has always been a natural artist and his teachers were able to identify his ability at a young age and helped him to refine and develop his skills. Andy's interest in drawing trains grew even stronger when he went on a family trip out west and was able to witness trains crossing the Rocky Mountains. Since that trip, he has continued to draw approximately 175 trains per year. Andy has been commissioned to draw trains for railroads, railroad historical societies and museums and is renowned among the rail community. One of his projects was the Norfolk Southern heritage locomotives.



Andy signs posters and postcards for passengers at the Raleigh Station.

In May, Andy traveled to North Carolina to help NCDOT celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the *Carolinian's* service. During his time in North Carolina, Andy was able to ride the *Carolinian*, visit various stations across the state, meet Rail Division staff and tour the Capital Yard Maintenance Facility. Andy's appreciation and love of trains is infectious and the Rail Division was honored and humbled by his visit and hope that he will return to N.C. soon!



Postcard drawn by Andy for the *Carolinian* Anniversary Celebration.

Coming in the July issue – photos from the *Carolinian* and Piedmont Anniversary Celebrations.

Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – March 2015 vs. 2014

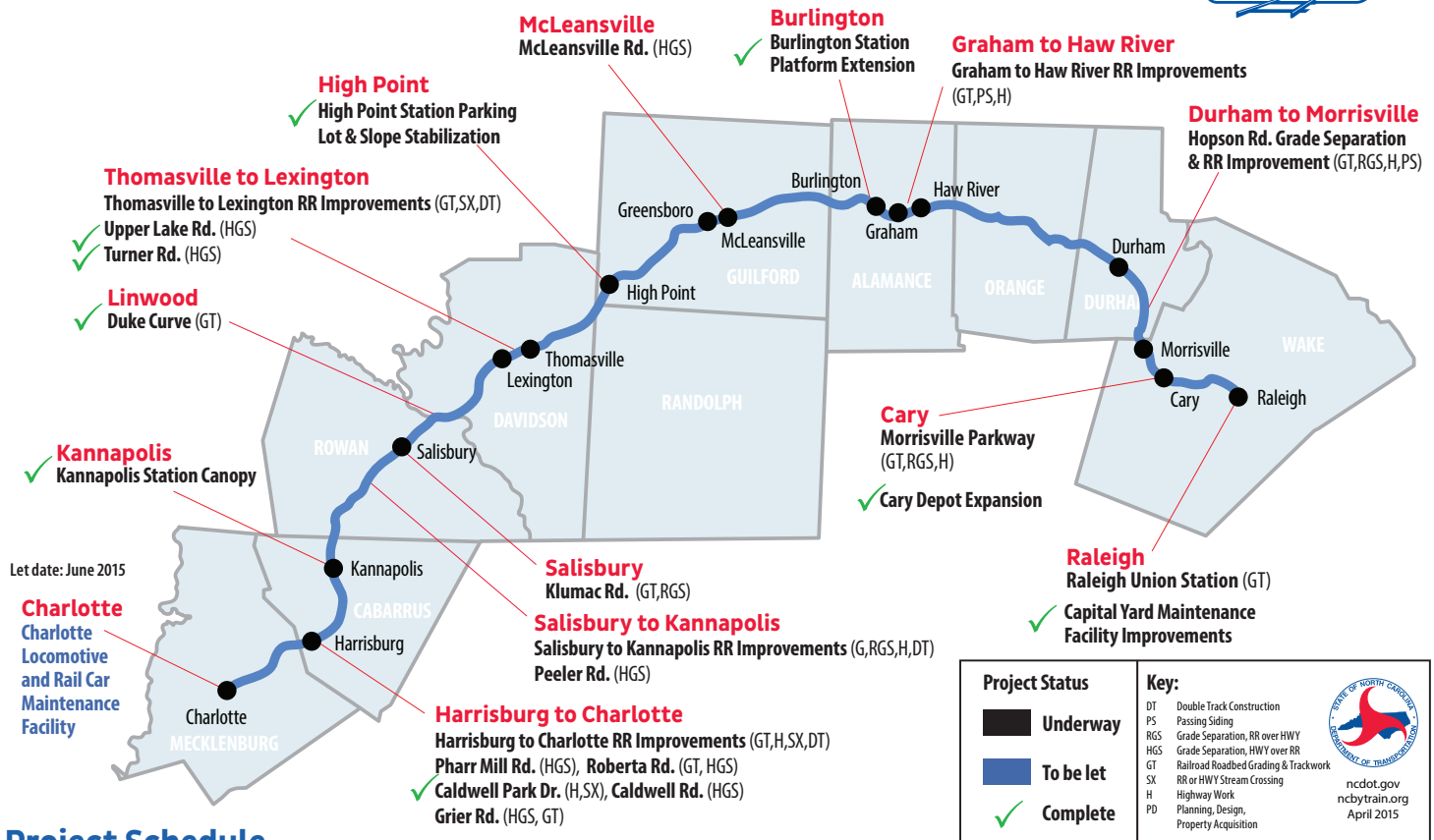
	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2015	2014	% +/-	2015	2014	% +/-
Piedmont	14,624*	13,842	6%	\$304,761	\$277,093	10%
Carolinian	25,859	26,492	-2%	\$1,641,019	\$1,564,974	5%

*Trains 73, 74, 75 and 76 were canceled on March 13 for PIP track work.

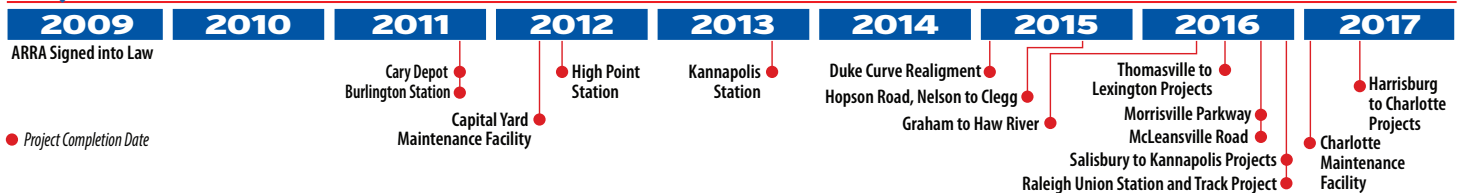


N.C. Train Hosts volunteered 930 hours in April, supporting North Carolina's Amtrak onboard trains and at events.

Piedmont Improvement Program – April 2015 Status Report



Project Schedule



ARRA Funds Spent to Date (effective 4/30/2015)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$45,761,114
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$26,588,813
Stations & Facilities	\$10,957,023
Track & Structures	\$159,257,561
CRISP	\$2,180,377
Program Totals	\$244,744,888 of \$520M awarded FRA Grant Funds

Two new contracts totaling \$173,555 were awarded in April.

PIP Milestones

Harrisburg - Approximately 1.3 miles of new track was put into service on April 27. Train operations on the new track will allow construction to be completed on the second half of the Rocky River railroad bridge and construction of new concrete crosstie switches north of Saddle Creek Court railroad crossing.

Durham

The new railroad bridge over Hopson Road is complete and construction of the new track over the bridge has begun. This portion of new track is anticipated to be put in service in June, allowing for the removal of the Hopson Road and Church Street railroad crossings as the project moves towards completion.



Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – April 2015



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway, bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg Passing Siding, track construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, grading



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding, working roadbed



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, sub-ballast



U-3459 Klumac Road, bridge construction

Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – April 2015



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, track construction



P-5206 Peeler Road, bridge construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, unloading rail



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, working roadbed



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, Rocky River Bridge



P-5208 Haydock to Junker, building roadbed